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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Former Teacher of the Year Sentenced to Prison for Sexually Abusing Students**

### ***Jaqueline Ma Groomed Young Boys at Her School in National City***

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) said today that Jacqueline Ma, 36, the former San Diego County Teacher of the Year who taught at Lincoln Acres Elementary School in National City, has been sentenced to 30 years-to-life in prison for sexually abusing two students.

Ma pleaded guilty on February 5 to two counts of forcible lewd act on a child, one count of lewd act on a child, and one count of possessing child sexual abuse material including allegations substantial sexual conduct and having multiple victims. She had been scheduled to stand trial in April.

“This defendant violated the trust she had with her students in the most extreme and traumatic way possible and her actions are despicable,” DA Stephan said. “Her victims will have to deal with a lifetime of negative effects and her 30-year sentence is appropriate. No child deserves what this defendant did and I hope this sentence brings a measure of justice to the victims, their families and the community that was left reeling from this defendant’s crimes.”

In March 2023, the mother of one of the victims found inappropriate messages on a family tablet between the student and teacher. Ma had groomed the minor for over a year before performing sexual acts on the him when he was 12. The parents did not allow the boy to have social media or his own electronics, but Ma was able to get access to him by setting up an unsanctioned after school program and directing him to communicate with her through a school chat application.

The sex acts perpetrated by Ma occurred in her classroom while the parents believed their son was participating in an afterschool basketball program, and the abuse continued for a period of three months. Further investigation found that Ma had targeted and sexually assaulted another student in 2020. That boy was 11 at the time. Ma had been grooming young boys with gifts, food and special attention and even completed their homework for them. She also gained the trust of the parents with her reputation and personal investment in their academic development.

Every student in San Diego County deserves to have a safe and nurturing educational environment, free of sexual and physical abuse. But if that kind of abuse does happen, students, parents and teachers can report it directly to the District Attorney's Office at <https://www.sdcda.org/helping/studentsafety/>.

Once suspected abuse is reported, the task force members will evaluate and investigate the claim, law enforcement will be notified to investigate allegations when appropriate, and families will be connected with trauma-informed resources and support.

Deputy District Attorney Andrew Hart prosecuted this case.

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**About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office**

*The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.*

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